

VLR 3/7/7  
NRHP 4/30/7

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

### 1. Name of Property

historic name Speed the Plough  
other names/site number DHR # 065-0040

### 2. Location

street & number 389 Fair Lea Lane not for publication N/A  
city or town Monroe vicinity \_\_\_\_\_  
state Virginia code VA county Amherst code 009 Zip 24574

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination    request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets    does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant    nationally    statewide X locally. (    See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

  
Signature of certifying official  
Virginia Department of Historic Resources  
State or Federal agency and bureau

  
Date

In my opinion, the property    meets    does not meet the National Register criteria. (    See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

   entered in the National Register

   See continuation sheet.

   determined eligible for the National Register

   See continuation sheet.

   determined not eligible for the National Register

   removed from the National Register

   other (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Keeper

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Action

U. S. Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceSpeed the Plough  
Amherst County, VA

---

**5. Classification**

---

**Ownership of Property** (Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☒ private  
☐ public-local  
☐ public-State  
☐ public-Federal

**Category of Property** (Check only one box)

- ☒ building(s)  
☐ district  
☐ site  
☐ structure  
☐ object

**Number of Resources within Property**

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>7</u>	<u>1</u> buildings
<u>8</u>	<u>3</u> sites
<u>4</u>	<u>0</u> structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> objects
<u>19</u>	<u>4</u> Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.) N/A

---

**6. Function or Use**

---

**Historic Functions** (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: <u>Domestic</u>	Sub: <u>Single Dwelling</u>
<u>Agriculture</u>	<u>Agricultural Buildings and Fields</u>
<u>Funerary</u>	<u>Cemetery</u>

**Current Functions** (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: <u>Domestic</u>	Sub: <u>Multiple Dwelling</u>
<u>Agriculture</u>	<u>Agricultural Buildings and Fields</u>
<u>Funerary</u>	<u>Cemetery</u>

---

**7. Description**

---

**Architectural Classification** (Enter categories from instructions)

Greek Revival (Main House)  
Tudor Revival (Additional Structures)

**Materials** (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick(Main House)  
roof Asphalt  
walls Brick  
other \_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Description** (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

---

**8. Statement of Significance**

---

**Applicable National Register Criteria** (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- ☐ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations** (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- ☐ A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ B removed from its original location.
- ☐ C a birthplace or a grave.
- ☐ D a cemetery.
- ☐ E a reconstructed building, object or structure.
- ☐ F a commemorative property.
- ☐ G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

---

**Areas of Significance** (Enter categories from instructions) Architecture

**Period of Significance** c. 1799 - 1940

**Significant Dates** c. 1850; 1927; 1933

**Significant Person** (Complete if Criterion B is marked above) N/A

**Cultural Affiliation** \_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder** William A. Dearing (1820 -1862)  
Rowland Lea (1871 -1960)  
George Stevens (1868 -1941)

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

---

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

---

**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS)**

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

U. S. Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceSpeed the Plough  
Amherst County, VA

## Primary Location of Additional Data

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office  
☐ Other State agency  
☐ Federal agency  
☐ Local government  
☐ University  
☐ Other

Name of repository: Virginia Department of Historic Resources

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 294 acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1) 17	659921E	4156195N	2) 17	659904E	4155878N			
3) 17	660608E	4155075N	4) 17	659421E	4154825N	5) 17	658863E	4155188N

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Sandra F. Esposito  
Organization: \_\_\_\_\_ date 3 Sep 2006  
street & number: 140 Cradon Hill Lane telephone 434-946-7496  
city or town Amherst state VA zip code 24521

## Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

## Continuation Sheets

**Maps** A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs** Representative black and white photographs of the property.**Additional items** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

## Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Rowland L. Girling  
street & number 389 Fair Lea Lane telephone 434-384-3102  
city or town Monroe state VA zip code 24574

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Speed the Plough  
Amherst County, VA

Section   7   Page   1  

---

**7. Summary Description:**

Summary Description

Speed the Plough is an almost-300-acre farm located near the village of Elon in Amherst County, Virginia. The circa 1850 brick house with hip roof and end chimneys was built by William A. Dearing. It has been home to the Dearing and the Lea/Girling families. The house is a two-story, single-pile building with a central passage built in the Greek Revival style. Around 1927 owner Rowland Lea added a one-story addition on the north side of the house and updated the interior with the installation of bathrooms and closets. In 1933 George C. Stevens, one of Lea's partners in the farm, financed many new structures including a barn, rock wall, and outbuildings; he also built the Rock Cottage, a one-and-one-half-story vacation home located on the property. This property also includes a springhouse, reservoir, the Dearing family cemetery, two African-American cemeteries and a series of man-made ponds and many possible archaeological sites dating from the eighteenth to the twentieth centuries. Historically, the principal agricultural products grown on the farm were tobacco, apples and peaches. In the late twentieth century the orchards were destroyed and the land became pasture. Dr. Rowland Lea Girling, grandnephew of Rowland Lea, currently owns the farm. Most of the buildings and farm structures remain and are in use, although some have been converted to housing. This farm's collection of buildings documents the changes that occurred in agriculture in Virginia from the late eighteenth to the twenty-first centuries.<sup>1</sup>

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Speed the Plough  
Amherst County, VA

Section   7   Page   2  

---

Detailed Description

Main House c.1850 - Exterior Description

William Alexander Dearing built the main house around 1850. The main elevation faces south and the house sits atop a small hill surrounded by larger hills which shield its view from the road and surrounding farms. It is a two-story brick single-pile structure in the Greek Revival style with a central passage and a basement. The bricks used in its construction were made on a site at the north side of the farm; the walls were laid in five-course American bond. There are two end chimneys on the east and west elevations of the house; on the north elevation is a third chimney dating from the twentieth century. The hip roof has asphalt shingles that cover the original tin roof. The main elevation is three bays symmetrically arranged on both stories. All of the windows in the original part of the house are six-over-six double-hung sash. The main entry is a single-leaf door with sidelights and a transom. The trim surrounding the door is a pair of Doric columns and the door has four raised panels that contain Tudor arches; the wooden panels beneath the sidelights match those in the door. The second-story center window has been replaced with a fifteen-light door. Although the original shutters no longer remain, the shutter hardware does. The lintels of the windows are wooden with large square corner blocks. At the basement level are two smaller six-over-six windows.<sup>2</sup>

The Leas built the existing wooden porch on the south elevation around 1927. This three-bay porch covers the central portion of the first floor of the house. The flat roof of the porch is decorated with a wooden balustrade. There is a set of wooden steps with the three lowest risers of brick leading to the porch; the steps have simple wooden rails and square balusters. This current arrangement of the steps accommodates another room beneath the porch created by the current owners.<sup>3</sup>

The east and west elevations are solid with the chimney running up the center of the walls. On the east elevation the Leas installed a small six-light casement window near the chimney. The north elevation was significantly altered during the remodeling of the house when the one-story wing was added. Originally this elevation was similar to the main elevation with its symmetrical placement of three bays. Currently, there are five bays on the second story with the original windows and two six-light casement windows added symmetrically between the original three. On the first story the original windows are still seen on either side of the addition.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Speed the Plough  
Amherst County, VA

Section   7   Page   3  

---

Main House c.1850 - Interior Description

The interior of the main house is a typical I –house with a rear one-story addition. The central hall has a double- run stair with a landing. The current stair, railings, and cupboards on the landing date from the Lea renovation, c. 1927. The ceiling height on the first story is 10 ½ feet and on the second story it is 9 ½ feet. The floors throughout the house are narrow in width, replacements for the original wide plank flooring, installed by the Leas and Girlings. In 1999 the crown moldings and chair rail were added throughout the house and the plaster walls were refinished in 2002.<sup>4</sup>

On the west side of the central hall is the living room. On the west wall is the original wooden mantel. This mantel is simple with stylized columns flanking the firebox. The mantel has no other decoration and the fireplace is no longer in use. The mantel in the west room of the second story is identical to the one in the living room and those mantels of the east rooms on both stories are a simpler variation of those in the west side of the house.<sup>5</sup>

The Leas renovated the dining room located to the east of the central hall. Like the living room there is one window on each of the north and south walls and the original mantel. The Leas installed a full bathroom with tiled walls in the northeast corner of the room. This bath was renovated in the 1980s and again updated in 2002. In the northwest corner of the room the Leas built a set of floor-to-ceiling closets.<sup>6</sup> The Leas also installed the same type of closets on the second floor in the hall and in both bedrooms.

The Leas also added full bathrooms in the second-floor bedrooms. The bath was created in the northeast corner of the west room and in the southwest corner of the east room. These rooms retain their original mantels with the west bedroom mantelpiece identical to that of the living room and the east bedroom mantelpiece identical to the dining room.<sup>7</sup>

The basement of the house has undergone much renovation. The west room has a simple exposed brick fireplace dating from c.1960. Currently there are built-in bookshelves flanking the fireplace that were added by Phillip and Mary Girling, parents of the current owner. The ceiling has exposed beams that are original and they show signs of hand-planed work; in the ceiling beneath the living room hearth the beams are pegged to support the hearth. On the south end of the basement the

Section   7   Page   4

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**Speed the Plough  
Amherst County, VA**

---

owners created, in 1999, a room beneath the porch area. The east room of the basement as well as the room beneath the c. 1927 addition are unfinished and are used for storage.<sup>8</sup>

Main House - Addition (c. 1927)

The Leas built the one-story brick addition to the north elevation and designed it to blend with the older section of the house. There are five bays on the north elevation of the addition. All windows in the addition are all double-light casement windows with the exception of the single light casement on the east elevation. At the basement level is modern single-leaf nine-light door into the basement and on the north the casements flank a similar entry. The west elevation has three bays; all casements. The basement level windows are all single six-light sashes.

The interior of the addition has two rooms; the western room was to be the Leas dining room. It now serves as a sitting room. This room has a wall of windows on both the west and north. The east wall has built-in shelves from floor to ceiling. The east room of the addition is the kitchen, which has been remodeled and updated to suit the current needs of the owners.<sup>9</sup>

Secondary Resources

Many outbuildings surround the main house to the north and east including the Rock Cottage, a garage/apartment, and a chicken house; these outbuildings and the main house are enclosed by a rock wall constructed c. 1933. Within the enclosed area are many mature trees such as boxwoods, magnolias, hollies, oaks and evergreens all of which were planted by the Leas. During this planting the level of the grounds surrounding the house were raised. Resources outside the wall include the barn, tenant house, bull pen, pump house, tennis court, tin shed, reservoir, and springhouse. The springhouse just east of the main house is the oldest surviving building on the farm. On a ridge to the east of the main house is the Dearing family cemetery, and an adjoining African-American cemetery, used by those who worked on the farm after the Civil War. Surrounding this ridge, the owners found additional rock walls. It is surmised that slaves working on the farm in the antebellum years built these walls. There are a series of three man-made ponds to the south and west of the house dating from the 1978 to the present. On another ridge to the southeast of the main house, according to Dr. Girling, is another home site, the only remaining evidence of which is a fallen chimney. Also according to Dr. Girling, there is another African-American cemetery of unmarked graves somewhere on the property, which is not counted in this nomination report. The property includes many possible archaeological sites



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Speed the Plough  
Amherst County, VA

Section 7 Page 5

---

of outbuildings no longer standing from both the nineteenth and twentieth centuries including, in the northern part of the farm, the kiln where the bricks for the main house were fired.<sup>10</sup>

Rock Cottage (c. 1933) - Exterior

The Rock Cottage, a contributing building, is located near the main house to the northwest. About 1933, George Stevens commissioned an unknown New York architect to design his home in the style of an old English hunting lodge. The house was built on the site of the old kitchen; the kitchen's location was mentioned by Dearing in an 1856 letter to his mother.

The cottage is made from local fieldstone and was built in a simplified Tudor Revival style by Samuel Belk, a local mason. The house is L-shaped with a central chimney and an asphalt shingle gable roof and rises one and a half stories over a basement. Surrounding the house on the east and south are terraces constructed of the fieldstone.<sup>11</sup>

The principal five-bay elevation faces east with the ell on the east. Most of the windows are casements that vary from nine to six lights. A six-over-six double-hung sash window faces west. The entry is a single-leaf door with four raised panels and three small round-arched windows in the top portion of the door. The entry porch roof forms a cross gable to the main house. The flooring and steps are of fieldstone. In the gable end of the ell is a double casement window. The half -story of the ell has casement dormer windows facing north and south.

The south elevation has one bay, a quadruple window; each sash has ten lights above an eight-light casement. At the basement level leading to a rock terrace is a single-leaf entry door with a small light in the center of the top portion of the door. Flanking the door are single four-over-four double-hung sash windows. The west elevation faces Tobacco Row Mountain. There is a square-sided bay window with four twelve-light windows on either side of a double casement window, each of which has fifteen lights. There is a ten-light casement and the rear entry is a twelve-light double-leaf French door. The basement is lighted by casement windows. The single-leaf door has nine lights at the top.

Rock Cottage (c. 1933) – Interior

The interior of the Rock Cottage retains most of its original materials including the floors,

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**Speed the Plough  
Amherst County, VA**

**Section   7      Page   6**

---

plaster walls and woodwork, as well as fixtures and the upholstery on the window seats. The kitchen is the only area to have been remodeled with modern fixtures and cabinets.

The house has a great hall on the south side, which serves as the main living and dining area. The walls are half-timbered and feature exposed roof beams. On the south wall are two sets of built-in shelves flanking a large southern window. One of the east bookcases opens to reveal a hidden iron spiral stair leading to the basement. On the west side one of the bookcases opens to reveal a secret storage area. Beneath the southern window and the bay window on the west wall are window seats; each one is six feet long with original green plush upholstery. The north wall is paneled and has a large stone fireplace, outfitted with metal cooking hardware such as a kettle holder, so as to appear as a fireplace from an older house. The mantelshelf is wooden with dentil work beneath. The door hardware, throughout the main floor of the house, replicates historic-type hardware such as the wrought L-hinges on the main entry door. The original ceiling light-fixture is made from a wagon wheel.

The dining room, northwest of the main hall, has a built-in cabinet with three leaded-glass doors. There is decorative wood trim around the cabinet. This room also has a double-leaf exterior French door on the west wall that is similar to the casement windows throughout the house. The current occupant uses the room as an office. North of the dining room is the kitchen that has been updated as necessitated for use.

Northeast of the great hall is the stair hall with closed stairs, one run to the half-story and one run to the basement. The master bedroom is east of the stair hall. This room is simple in decoration but the original twin reading lamps on the north wall remain. There are two closets, one small closet on the south wall and a walk-in closet in the northeast corner. On the northwest corner is a dressing room with built-in drawers, one of these concealing another secret drawer used by Mrs. George Stevens to secure her jewels.<sup>12</sup>

Adjacent to the dressing room with access from the stair hall is a bathroom. This room remains like it was originally created. The fixtures are excellent examples of art deco including the medicine cabinet mirror. This room also has separate bathtub and shower.

**Section   7      Page   7**

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**Speed the Plough  
Amherst County, VA**

---

The half-story rooms above the north area of the house were children's or guest rooms. There are two bedrooms, one east and one west each containing full bathrooms with original fixtures. The door hardware on this floor is brass. The east bedroom on this floor has a built-in wardrobe.<sup>13</sup>

The basement has four rooms and served as an entertainment area. The smaller rooms on the north end of the house are now used for storage. The Stevens family used one of these rooms for playing cards or for small intimate groups. The large room beneath the great hall was used for square dances held there during the Depression years.

The floor is tiled in a geometric pattern. The west wall once contained a mural but it was lost due to water damage and this wall has been replastered. The north wall has a large, stone fireplace with an oven, a simple wooden shelf and a seat around the hearth. The east wall has a built-in wet bar and a large mural painted by a family member. This mural depicts Rowland Lea dressed in farming attire standing next to George Stevens who is clad in hunting attire. Together they are looking over the fields and a hunting dog is approaching the men. On the south wall is the iron spiral stair from the main floor. Hanging from the ceiling are original light fixtures created from horseshoes.

Garage/Apartment (c. 1933) – Exterior

The garage/apartment, a contributing building, is in the same Tudor Revival style as the Rock Cottage and was built with local fieldstone with an asphalt shingle gable roof. It is located to the east across a circular drive from the Rock Cottage and northeast of the main house. It has two fieldstone chimneys; one large chimney in the center of the building and a smaller chimney at the roofline of the eastern section. The garage portion of the building faces south and is a three-car garage with a double sliding, wood batten-style door with three small windows in a triangular pattern. In the gable above the doors is a six-light casement window with three lights on either side. On both the east and west elevations at the garage level is a double six-light casement window topped by four lights. The basement level on the east elevation of the garage has a storage area beneath the drive on the south end. Beneath the garage floor are three openings. The center opening is a batten-style door; it is flanked by double three-light casements. The entry opens onto rock terrace.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Speed the Plough  
Amherst County, VA

---

The apartment is one story with the main elevation facing west. The principal entry is a single-leaf door: a batten door with three small lights in a triangular pattern in the same style of the garage doors. The entry is reached by a run of stone steps from the north. A pedimented projection shields the entry. Beneath the rock stair is a one-over-one sash window. The window replaced the original metal chute used to load wood into the wood room beneath the apartment. The wood room has been remodeled as living space.<sup>14</sup>

The east elevation or rear of the apartment is L-shaped. In the gable are both a large and a small casement window. On the south elevation at the basement level is a six-light casement window, a nine-light single-leaf door and a batten door. Both doors have rock walkways leading to the larger rock terrace at the basement level of the garage. The walkway leading to the old wood room is a ramp created for use with a wheelbarrow so wood could easily be loaded and rolled to where it was needed. The batten door opened to the "smokehouse," a small area beneath the apartment used to store meats. At the southern end of this elevation, beneath the drive into the garage, is a coal bin.<sup>15</sup>

Garage/Apartment (c. 1933) – Interior

The garage area and workroom beneath the garage, located on the south end of the building, are large open rooms. The garage has a stair that was never finished; it was to be another entry into the apartment. The workroom has a large fireplace to provide heat to this area. The Girlings plan to make this area a gardening room.<sup>16</sup>

The apartment on the north side of the building has two rooms and a bathroom. The main room combines the living room and kitchen. The bathroom, on the northeast corner, has some original c. 1933 fixtures. A small hall shaped as a clipped arch separates the bedroom on the south end from the living area. The bedroom has a built-in dresser on the west wall next to the closet. The south wall, near the ceiling has cubbyholes on either side of the window as well as on the north wall.<sup>17</sup>

Below the apartment is an area that was called the wood room. It was used to protect and store wood for the winter. The owners have remodeled the area and made it two rooms; one for use as a laundry room and the other is an additional room for the apartment.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Speed the Plough  
Amherst County, VA

---

Rock Wall (c. 1933)

A contributing structure that surrounds the main house, Rock Cottage, garage/apartment and chicken house is a rock wall, originally dry-laid fieldstone which was repaired and mortar placed between the stones by the current owners.

Chicken House (c. 1933)

The one-story, one-room Chicken House, a contributing structure, is southeast of the garage/apartment and northeast of the main house. It is set into the hill and is constructed of fieldstone with the roofline set off-center towards the east. The gable roof is shingle on the west and corrugated fiberglass on the east. The principal entry, a Dutch door, and a triple set of nine-light windows are on the south elevation. The east elevation has a half wall of fieldstone and the upper portion has with twelve single sashes. The north elevation has a single solid entry door and the east elevation is a solid half-wall from the ground level to the eaves of the roof. The chicken house is currently undergoing rehabilitation. Final plans for the building are still under consideration.

Barn (c. 1933)

The barn, a contributing building, is located northeast of the main house. It is a bank barn with a poured concrete foundation and was built around 1933. It has an asphalt shingle gable roof with one brick chimney in the roof of the northwest part of the building. The principal elevation faces southeast. The lower level is used as a horse stall with a corral northeast of the building and beyond the corral is the old wooden pigpen, which has collapsed. The lower story has three bays; the central bay is a sliding batten door and flanking the door are two single small four-light windows. The main story of the southeast elevation has three symmetrically placed six-light casement windows, the typical windows of the structure. In the gable is a single four-light casement.<sup>18</sup>

In the center of the southwest elevation is a ramp to a large sliding batten door. There are three casements on either side of the central entry and a batten door. There are three three-light windows at the basement level. At the northwest elevation is a metal silo.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**Speed the Plough  
Amherst County, VA**

The interior upper level of the barn is a large room used to store farm machinery. On the southwest corner of the building is a small apartment, which is to be rehabilitated in the future. The lower level of the barn contains four stalls on the south wall that was used to hold the riding horses, in the northwest corner were four milking stations and in the north area of the barn draft horses were tied.

Tenant House (c. 1940)

The tenant house, a contributing building, is located to the southwest of the barn at the edge of a pasture. The simple one-story house was built entirely of cinderblocks around 1940 and was used by a family that worked on the farm. It has an asphalt shingle gable roof with a small center chimney. The three-bay principal elevation faces east. Two six-over-six double-hung sash windows flank the central entry. This door is a single-leaf six-panel door. The three-bay entry porch is wooden with square wooden posts supporting an asphalt shingle shed roof.

The tenant house is simple in its interior plan and decoration. The living room is the largest room in the house and it is the only room through which the kitchen on the northwest corner is accessed. The kitchen has been updated.

Bull Pen (c. 1933)

A contributing structure is in the yard of the tenant house. It is a wood-framed bullpen used to separate the bulls from the heifers. The area surrounding the structure is overgrown and the building is not in use. It is a small weatherboard building with the entry on the east.

Pump house (c. 1933 and 2005)

This contributing building is located east of the barn and north of the tennis court. The wood-frame building with poured concrete foundation was used to house the water pump for the farm's irrigation system. The eastern section of the building was built about 1933 and it was remodeled and enlarged by the current owners into a small ranch-style house in 2005. The house has an asphalt shingle gable roof with a cross gable on the east. The three-bay principal elevation faces west. The single-leaf door has horizontal raised panels on the bottom with six lights in the top.<sup>19</sup>

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**Speed the Plough  
Amherst County, VA**

The lower section of the original structure has an access door to the lower portion of the pumphouse; the space is now used for storage. On the east elevation is a sliding glass door that replaced the original window. Access to this door is from a wooden patio with a wooden stair. The south elevation has three bays on one-over-one double-hung sash windows.

The Girlings completely remodeled the building and constructed the western section of the house. The original pumphouse is now the bedroom and the interior entry to this room was the original exterior entry. The kitchen, living room and bath are the new section that was completed in 2005.<sup>20</sup>

Tennis Court (c. 1933)

The tennis court, a contributing site, is immediately north of the rock wall. It replaced an old barn in the 1930s and was originally of clay. The court was paved with asphalt in the 1970s.<sup>21</sup>

Tin Shed (c. 1980)

The tin shed, a non-contributing building, is the furthest outbuilding from the main fenced area of the farm. It is located northeast of the main house and northeast of the pump house. It is constructed over earlier foundations of rock and cement. Possibly these were once the foundations for the packing sheds. The metal building with a double set of double-leaf doors is used to store equipment.

Reservoir (c. 1915-1925)

This reservoir, a contributing site, is located on a knoll above the tin shed. It is constructed of concrete and was used to hold water to irrigate the orchard. The Montrose Fruit Company built it to store water for their irrigation. It is abandoned.

Cemeteries

The Dearing family cemetery, a contributing site, is located to the east of the main house on a ridgeline overlooking the house. It contains the graves of three family members within the  
**Section \_\_7\_\_      Page \_\_12\_\_**

wrought iron fenced area with a stone monument in the center marked "Dearing." The burials

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Speed the Plough  
Amherst County, VA

are William Dearing (d.1862), his wife Jane (d.1910) and their eldest son, Clarence (d.1907).

Adjacent to the family cemetery is the small African-American cemetery (contributing site) with some headstones and rock markers. According to Sweet Briar College professor, Dr. Lynn Rainville, this portion of the cemetery is typical for this period. The entire cemetery area is overgrown and there are remains of rock walls along the ridge (contributing structure). Also, according to the owner, there is another African-American burial ground that is unmarked.<sup>22</sup> This second possible cemetery is not counted in this inventory since its location is unknown.

Springhouse (c. 1799-1816 and 2006)

The springhouse, a contributing building, is located down the hill, below the cemetery and east of the main house. This is possibly the oldest remaining building on the farm. The dating on this building comes from a piece of the original doorframe construction. The frame was constructed with wooden pegs and later repairs were made with square-head nails. It was originally built of dry-laid fieldstone; however during restoration mortar was applied in such a way that the wall still appears to be built of dry-laid stones. The south section of the building was enclosed and had a batten door on the south elevation for access to the spring. The north wall had an opening with a grill to allow circulation of air. The north end of the springhouse had steps into the running water. The area was covered. This building had fallen into disrepair and the roof collapsed. The owners have recently restored the building. Before restoration, archaeology students from Sweet Briar College came to the site and recorded the aboveground artifacts, no digging was done. Lynchburg's Blue Ridge chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution adopted (and will indefinitely maintain) the springhouse in conjunction with the owners. The springhouse will be shown to the public on appointed weekends throughout 2007. The Girlings are hoping that many visitors will come to see the historic nature of an old springhouse and a historic farm during the Jamestown 2007 commemoration.<sup>23</sup>

Ponds (1978 and c. 2000)

There are a series of three ponds, all non-contributing sites, used for recreation. The owner constructed the larger pond, to the west of the main house, with his father, Philip Girling, in 1978. The two smaller ponds, south of the main house, were created within the past few years. All of these ponds were built on marshy areas fed by natural springs.<sup>24</sup>



**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**Speed the Plough  
Amherst County, VA**

Possible Archaeological Sites

There are many other sites on the farm that could contribute to its history. Dr. Rowland Girling knows of an old home site on a knoll to the southeast of the main house and on the west of the property, in one of the pastures, which a fallen chimney is all that remains (contributing site). Dr. Girling knows of a frame house with a cement foundation that once stood in an area near the largest pond and a cement springhouse that is now underwater (contributing site). Also, there is another frame house on the property that is partially collapsed (contributing site). The owners' historic photos show additional packing sheds located in the field to the northwest of the barn. At the northern part of the farm stands the kiln site where the bricks for the main house were fired (contributing site). Archaeological studies of the entire acreage would likely yield more information to contribute to the history of the farm.<sup>25</sup>

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**Speed the Plough  
Amherst County, VA**

Summary Significance Statement

Speed the Plough is a nearly 300-acre farm with a ca. 1850 brick main house and a collection of farm buildings and other resources that collectively illustrate Virginia's agricultural history. Locally significant under National Register Criterion C, this farm is an excellent example of the progression of farm buildings representing changes in Virginia's agricultural economy from c. 1799 to 1940. The owners of the farm first grew tobacco and grains, then changed to fruit production in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, and eventually raised cattle. Most of the buildings were constructed ca. 1933 and are built of fieldstone by a local stone mason. The main brick house is attributed to William Alexander Dearing (1820-1862). Earlier buildings and sites include the newly restored springhouse, an early home site and the Dearing family cemetery with an adjacent African-American graveyard. Dearing was known to have about fourteen slaves on the farm in 1860. The Dearing family held the property until 1915 when the Montrose Fruit Company planted the land in orchards and built an irrigation reservoir, abandoning many of the earlier buildings including the house. Rowland Lea (1872-1960) acquired the land, continued the orchard and occupied and remodeled the antebellum house. The farm received a major remodeling when George Stevens (1868-1941) became partner and created a summer residence, the Rock Cottage, on the property. The existing barn, chicken house, bull pen, pump house and garage/apartment are all part of the improvements. To house farm hands, a tenant house of cinderblock was constructed near the barn. The orchard continued as a Pick-Your-Own business until about 1980. The land is currently pasture for cattle and is home to a small village of four to five residents living in various outbuildings; including the Rock Cottage, the garage/apartment, the tenant house, the pump house and the chicken house. The property owners occupy the main antebellum brick house. The beauty of the surroundings entices many local artists and art classes to use it as a study for their work.<sup>26</sup>

Detailed Background

The property of the farm began as part of a land grant owned by Duncan Graham of Caroline County. He obtained over 5000 acres in various land patents. One in particular described 240 acres at the southside foot of "Tobacco Row Mountain at the headwaters of Harris Creek," Graham's Creek, as it is now known, flows from the foot of the mountain into Harris

**Section \_\_8\_\_ Page \_\_15\_\_**

---

Creek and was likely named after Duncan Graham, who held so much land in this area. Graham sold 710 acres in 1778 to George McDaniel, who parceled his land and sold 353 acres to Philip

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**Speed the Plough  
Amherst County, VA**

Burton in 1799.<sup>27</sup>

Philip Burton died in 1801 and left his second wife, Nancy, life interest in the property with the provision that after her death the land would revert to Patrick Burton, Philip's son by his first marriage. Nancy Burton remarried in 1805, at which time she contested Burton's will. In 1815, to settle the disagreement, Patrick Burton sold the land to Nelson C. Dawson (1760-1843), Nancy's husband. Nelson sold the land to his son-in-law Dabney Ware (1787-1846). This 1816 transaction contains the first reference to Graham's Creek.<sup>28</sup>

In 1825 Ware moved west and sold the parcel of now 282 acres of land to John R. Irvine of Bedford, Virginia. No evidence suggests that Irvine resided on the property though he owned the land through 1835 when it was sold to Charles Ellis (1772-1840) of Richmond. Ellis likely used the land for cultivating tobacco for sale through his company Ellis and Allan. The partner of Charles Ellis was John Allan, the foster father of Edgar Allan Poe. The headquarters of the tobacco merchants and general merchandisers was in Richmond, Virginia with a subsidiary in Lynchburg and Amherst.

The name for the farm, Speed the Plough, has its origins from several sources. It had acquired the name by 1850 when William Alexander Dearing (1820-1862) of Rappahannock County, Virginia purchased it from the Charles Ellis estate. Speed the Plough is a phrase used as a wish for prosperity or success and was the title of a fifteenth-century song sung by the ploughmen in England returning to the plow on the first Monday after Epiphany.<sup>29</sup>

William Dearing began construction of the brick house around 1850 and in 1856 erected the kitchen, the same year his last child was born. Dearing married Jane Eastham (1826-1910) in 1847; their children were Clarence (1849-1907), Addie Eugenia (1853-1953), and William Alfred (1856-1892).<sup>30</sup>

The tobacco and grain crops grown by Dearing on the farm required the ownership of slaves. The slave census for 1860 listed him owning fourteen slaves from ages 9 to 32; eight of these were male.<sup>31</sup>

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Speed the Plough  
Amherst County, VA

Dearing died at the age of 42, due to a feud with a neighbor named Valentine Rucker (1831-1899). The beginning of the feud is unknown, but Dearing felt he must avenge himself. He lay in wait for Rucker at a store in the village of Bethel or Salt Creek about two miles from the farm. When Dearing saw Rucker coming, he fired his weapon, but missed. Rucker was thrown from his horse but recovered his senses enough to return fire, fatally wounding Dearing who was taken home where he died. He was buried on the hill overlooking the main house. Rucker was placed on trial and was subsequently acquitted of murder.<sup>32</sup>

Jane, left with three young children, managed the farm until her death in 1910. She is listed as a farmer in Chataigne's Business Directory of 1889. Jane, Clarence, Addie and Alfred were founding members of the Elon Baptist Church in 1877. Clarence died in 1907, and was buried near his father. After Jane's death, she, too, was buried in the family cemetery. William Alfred, known as Alfred, married Elizabeth Scott. He died at a young age, leaving his wife with a young son. Addie, Jane's only surviving child, married Radford Millner Cox (1849-1922) in 1880 and raised several children.<sup>33</sup>

Addie Cox sold the farm in 1915 to the Montrose Fruit Company, which had headquarters in Lynchburg and New York City. The company planted orchards of peaches and apples and shipped them to sell. The company experienced financial difficulties that resulted in the need to liquidate assets, including the farm. The president of the company in New York was Sidney Stevens (1867-1938), brother-in-law to Rowland Lea and sister to Lea's wife, Theodora Stevens Lea who purchased the farm of just under 300 acres from the fruit company in 1927, and then continued to raise fruit.<sup>34</sup> The Leas had lived in the Elon area from about 1915. In 1927, they remodeled the interior of the main house, installing bathrooms and closets, and they built the porch and the north wing.<sup>35</sup>

Rowland Lea (1871-1960) was born in England and raised on a large family farm in Manitoba, Canada. Theodora Stevens Lea (1872-1943) was born in New York and taught school in Chapin, New York before she met Rowland. After marriage they lived in Reno, Nevada where he was a mining engineer before they moved to the Amherst area around 1915. Both worked for the Montrose Fruit Company and lived on another nearby farm.<sup>36</sup>

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**Speed the Plough  
Amherst County, VA**

Rowland and Theodora Lea were both active in local affairs including Sweet Briar College. Rowland was an organizer of the Amherst-Nelson Fruit Growers Association, director of the Virginia State Horticultural Society, president and director of the Feeder Calf Producers Association, president of County National Farm Loan Association, and treasurer of the Elon Betterment League. From 1940 until his death, Rowland Lea served on the Board of Overseers of Sweet Briar College and in various offices on the Board such as Secretary and Chairman of the Farm Committee. Mrs. Lea, along with other like-minded women, founded the Civic Betterment League for the village of Elon. Their projects, supported by the Colgate Fund, included procuring a registered nurse to work in Elon and within a five-mile radius around the village as doctors were unavailable during World War I, and setting up the first dental clinic in Amherst Schools. The Civic Betterment League's most outstanding project was to begin a free circulating library in the village. This project began in 1916 and response was so well received that a permanent location was needed and built by 1918. The library operated until around the 1970s. The small clapboard building that housed the library still remains and is the property of Elon Baptist Church. Mrs. Lea was active in the Victory Garden Program during World War II. She was awarded the Algernon-Sullivan Award by Sweet Briar College for her dedication to community service.<sup>37</sup>

Family members came from Canada to help manage the farm. They included Phyllis Lea (1893-1982) and Theodora Lea Girling (1877-1969), sisters of Rowland. Phyllis Lea and Theodora both resided at "Fairlea," an adjoining farm with a house built by George Stevens. Joining the family about 1938 was Theodora Girling's son, Philip (1908-1994) and Philip's new wife Mary (1912-1998). Philip soon became the farm manager.<sup>38</sup>

George C. Stevens (1868-1941), brother to Theodora Stevens Lea, also came to the farm. A representative of Lloyd's of London, he worked in Manhattan. Stevens liked the farm so well that he wanted to have a summer home there where he could ride and hunt. He partnered with Rowland Lea in 1933 and they started the company, Lea & Stevens. George Stevens was responsible for the rock wall enclosure around the heart of the farm, the fieldstone buildings and the barn which were all built around 1933. He hired an unknown New York architect to design the Rock Cottage and it was constructed by Samuel Belk, who also built several other homes in the area including a neighboring residence known as "The Shelter".<sup>39</sup>

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Speed the Plough  
Amherst County, VA

The Rock Cottage was a center for entertaining. One summer resident was Edith Baretto Parsons (1878- 1956), a sculptress and the youngest Stevens sibling. She enjoyed working the gardens. One of her works, "Pan", is on display outside the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C. Rowland Lea gave one of her sculptures, a young boy with a duck, to Sweet Briar College in 1958; it is still displayed in the President's Garden.<sup>40</sup>

Events at the farm during the Depression years, included square dances held in the basement of the Rock Cottage with music provided by a wind-up Victrola and a caller named Charlie Tillson. The visitors, usually around twenty-five people at a time, were from the Lynchburg area and members of a club, and pooled their money to purchase the beer that was served at these dances.<sup>41</sup>

George Stevens died in 1941 and left his share of the farm to his son, Leighton. Both Leighton Stevens and Rowland Lea, over a period of years, slowly deeded full ownership of the farm to Philip Girling, who had been managing the orchards. By 1960, Philip had full ownership of the business and continued to manage it as a "Pick-Your-Own" orchard until the late twentieth century; Speed the Plough remained a social center. The family hosted Sunday afternoon tennis games through the 1980s.<sup>42</sup> The current owner, Rowland Lea Girling (b.1942), is the son of Philip and Mary. He grew up on the farm with his sister Diane (1944-1986). Dr. Girling inherited Speed the Plough and Fairlea after his mother's death in 1998. He and his wife, Lorraine Shiels Girling, are concerned with the preservation of the farm and work to maintain its historic character. The farm no longer operates as an orchard; the land is used to graze cattle and the outbuildings are rehabilitated or reused, most as residences. Today, the farm is a small neighborhood surrounded by pastureland. The scenic beauty of the farm with its ponds and vistas is used by art classes in landscape painting and occasional weddings. In 2006 the Girlings completed restoration on the Springhouse. A preliminary study of above ground objects was conducted by Sweet Briar College archaeological students and the Lynchburg's Blue Ridge chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution. The Blue Ridge chapter of the DAR chapter adopted the site as their project for the Jamestown Commemoration and they will maintain the surrounding landscape indefinitely. The Girlings hope to have many visitors to the farm throughout the 400<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Jamestown Settlement in 2007 and beyond, to appreciate the unique character of this historic farm.<sup>43</sup>

Section 9 Page 19

---

## 9. Bibliography:

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Speed the Plough  
Amherst County, VA

“Chataigne’s Business Directory 1888-1889,” (accessed 3 July 2006), available from  
<http://www.ls.net/~newriver/va/amher88.htm>.

Chapman, Dudley, Jr. Letter to Lorri Girling, 28 Nov 2002, private collection.

“Dearing Family Bible,” (accessed 3 July 2006), available online from the Library of Virginia,  
<http://www.lvimage.lib.va.us>.

Elon Baptist Church Records, private collection of Elon Baptist Church.

Federal Census Records 1870, (accessed 3 July 2006), available online from Ancestry.com,  
<http://www.ancestry.com>.

Federal Census Records 1900, (accessed 3 July 2006), available online from Ancestry.com,  
<http://www.ancestry.com>.

Federal Slave Census Records 1860, (accessed 3 July 2006), available online from Ancestry.com,  
<http://www.ancestry.com>

French, Samuel Basset. Biographical Sketches (accessed 3 July 2006), available online from the Library of Virginia,  
<http://www.lvimage.lib.va.us>.

Genealogy Files of Dawson Family, unpublished material in the files of the Amherst County Museum & Historical Society, undated.

Genealogy Files of Dearing Family, unpublished material in the files of the Amherst County Museum & Historical Society, undated.

Genealogy Files of Ellis Family, unpublished material in the files of the Amherst County Museum & Historical Society, undated.

Genealogy Files of Lea Family, unpublished material in the files of the Amherst County Museum & Historical Society, undated.

Genealogy Files of Rucker Family, unpublished material in the files of the Amherst County Museum & Historical Society, undated.

Girling Family Papers, private collection of Girling family.

Section 9 Page 20

---

Girling, Lorraine Shiels. Lea/Girling Family, unpublished genealogy of the family.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**Speed the Plough  
Amherst County, VA**

Girling, Lorraine Shiels. Speed the Plough. Preliminary Information Form filed with the VA Dept. of Historic Resources, 22 May 2003.

Girling, Dr. Rowland Lea and Lorraine Shiels. Interviews of owners by Sandra Esposito, various dates.

Hardesty, H. H. "Personal Histories of Amherst County," Hardesty's Historical & Geographical Encyclopedia. Richmond, Virginia, 1884.

Hendrick, Robert. Encyclopedia of Word or Phrase Origins. (accessed 3 July 2006), available online at <http://www.phrases.org.uk>.

Pendleton, Miles "Kim." Telephone interview by Sandra Esposito, 8 August 2006.

Rucker, Christopher D, MD, Biographical Sketches of Thirteen Ruckers of the Nineteenth Century Amherst County, Virginia. unpublished, 1998, in the files of the Amherst County Museum and Historical Society.

Speed the Plough. (accessed 3 July 2006), information regarding origin of phrase available online at <http://www.ibiblio.org/fiddlers/speed.htm>.

Virginia Biographical Encyclopedia. (accessed 3 July 2006), available online at Ancestry.com, <http://www.ancestry.com>.

Amherst County Deed Book E, p. 6.

Amherst County Deed Book H, p. 535.

Amherst County Deed Book N, pp.28, 64, 507.

Amherst County Deed Book O, p.155.

Amherst County Deed Book R, p.209.

Amherst County Deed Book V, p.241.

Amherst County Deed Book BB, p. 118.

Amherst County Deed Book EE, p.169.

Amherst County Deed Book 69, pp. 217-218.

**Section 9, 10 Page 21**

---

Amherst County Deed Book 73, p. 326.



**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**Speed the Plough  
Amherst County, VA**

Amherst County Deed Book 84, p. 314.

Amherst County Deed Book 92, p. 422.

Amherst County Deed Book 96, p. 427.

Amherst County Deed Book 105, p. 285.

Amherst County Deed Book 192, p.248.

Amherst County Deed Book 196, p.358.

Amherst County Deed Book 206, p. 232.

Amherst County Deed Book 478, p.1.

Amherst County Deed Book 806, p. 525.

Amherst County Order Book 1859-1863, pp. 349, 355, 364, 368.

Amherst County Will Book 4, pp. 164, 168.

Amherst County Will Book 16, p. 227.

Amherst County Will Book 29, p. 494.

**10. Geographical Description:**

**Verbal Boundary Description**

The property being nominated is identified as tax parcel #A-19 on tax parcel maps 106, 121, and 122 for Amherst County, Virginia.

**Boundary Justification**

This is the same property bought by Rowland Lea and identified in Amherst County Deed Book 92, p. 422 dated 18 December 1925.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**Speed the Plough  
Amherst County, VA**

**Section** Photo List **Page** 22

---

The following information is the same for all photographs:

Property: Speed the Plough Farm

Location: Amherst County; DHR File # 005-0040

Date of photographs: August 2006, unless otherwise noted

Photographer: Sandi Esposito

Negatives Filed: Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Richmond

Photo 1 of 14

View: Main House, South Elevation, Dec 2006

Negative Number: 23406: 8A

Photo 2 of 14

View: Main House, North Elevation

Negative Number: 23340: 13-13A

Photo 3 of 14

View: Main House, Central Hall and Main Stair

Negative Number: 23342: 24A

Photo 4 of 14

View: Main House, Main Entry

Negative Number: 23344: 20A-21

Photo 5 of 14

View: Main House, Living Room

Negative Number: 23344: 0A-1

Photo 6 of 14

View: Main House, Dining Room

Negative Number: 23344: 3A-4

Photo 7 of 14

View: Rock Cottage

Negative Number: 23340: 12-12A

Photo 8 of 14

View: Rock Cottage, West elevation

Negative Number: 23338: 00A-0

Photo 9 of 14

View: Rock Cottage, Great Hall

Negative Number: 23343: 0A-1

Photo 10 of 14

View: Garage/Apartment, East Elevation

Negative Number: 23340: 21-21A

Photo 11 of 14

View: Chicken House, South Elevation

Negative Number: 23340: 20-20A

Photo 12 of 14

View: Barn and Silo, South Elevation

Negative Number: 23341: 17A-18

Photo 13 of 14

View: Tenant House, West Elevation

Negative Number: 23341: 22A-23

Photo 14 of 14

View: Spring House, South Elevation

Negative Number: 23338: 21A-22

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Speed the Plough  
Amherst County, VA

Section Endnotes for 7, 8 Page 23

---

<sup>1</sup> *Amherst County Deed Book BB*, 118 (16 November 1850); *Amherst County Deed Book 806*, 525 (4 April 2000); *Amherst County Deed Book 69*, 217-218 (19 March 1913); *Amherst County Will Book 16*, 227 (23 March 1861); Dr. Rowland Girling and Lorri Girling, current owners, interviews on various dates by Sandra Esposito; Girling Family Papers, a private collection of the owners; *Amherst County Deed Book 73*, 326 (1 July 1915); *Amherst County Deed Book 92*, 422 (18 December 1925); *Amherst County Deed Book 105*, 285 (20 February 1933); Virginia & Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 1989), 354-371; and *Amherst County Deed Book 478*, 1 (12 May 1982).

<sup>2</sup> Originally the house had an English basement; and *Amherst County Deed Book BB*, 118 (16 November 1850).

<sup>3</sup> Replacement bricks near the entry are evidence of the original smaller portico; and information from owners.

<sup>4</sup> The current stair replaced the original steeper staircase; and information from owners.

<sup>5</sup> In the living room is a Steinway Player Piano, originally located in the Rock Cottage, which belonged to the Stevens family and decorating the living room mantel and bookcase are four small animal sculptures by Edith Parsons. Throughout this room and the house, original artwork by family and close family friends is displayed.

<sup>6</sup> Information from owners.

<sup>7</sup> The bathrooms were renovated in the 1960s and the owners replaced a sink in the east bathroom in 2002 according to information from owners.

<sup>8</sup> According to the owners the west basement room was replastered and the windows rebuilt in 2004.

<sup>9</sup> Information from owners.

<sup>10</sup> Information from owners; and according to the owners the rock fence that encloses the main area of the farm was updated between 1999 and 2003.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid*; and William Dearing, *Letter to his mother* (1856), Mr. Samuel Belk (1898-1982), the local stone mason, according to Dr. Girling built a neighboring house known as "Stonehurst" or by its older name of "the Shelter" (the house of Davey Hugh Dillard) and another house known as the McConnell that is also near to the Girlings' farm; and the Girling Family papers.

<sup>12</sup> Information from owners.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid*.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Speed the Plough  
Amherst County, VA

---

Section Endnotes for 7, 8 Page 24

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Allen G. Noble and Richard K. Cleek, *The Old Barn Book: A Field Guide to North American Barns & Other Farm Structures* (New Jersey: University of Rutgers Press, 1995), 79-82.

<sup>19</sup> Information from owners.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Information from owners; and Dr. Lynn Rainville of Sweet Briar College, telephone interview by Sandra Esposito (15 June 2006).

<sup>23</sup> Information from owners.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> *Federal Slave Census Records 1860* (accessed 3 July 2006), available online from Ancestry.com, <http://www.ancestry.com>; *Amherst County Deed Book 73*, 326 (1 July 1915); *Amherst County Deed Book 105*, 285 (20 February 1933); and Information from owners.

<sup>27</sup> Land Patent (14 February 1761), available online from Library of Virginia at <http://lib.va.us>; *Amherst County Deed Book E*, 6 (10 March 1778); and *Amherst County Deed Book H*, 535 (22 March 1799).

<sup>28</sup> *Amherst County Will Book 4*, 164, 168 (2 November 1891, 14 February 1805); *Genealogical Files of the Dawson Family*, files of the Amherst County Museum and Historical Society; *Amherst County Deed Book N*, 28 (7 December 1815); and *Amherst County Deed Book N*, 64 (10 April 1816); *Amherst County Deed Book N*, 507 (15 April 1818); *Amherst County Deed Book O*, 155 (19 September 1818); The construction of the earliest buildings such as the springhouse and the old home sites likely occurred between the ownership of Philip Burton in 1799 through Dabney Ware's ownership to 1825 because we know that owners were actually living on their land; around 1800, a play by English Dramatist Thomas Morton (1768-1838) entitled "Speed the Plough" opened for the first time in America in Boston; Two members of that cast were the biological parents of Edgar Allan Poe.

Section Endnotes for 7, 8 Page 25

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Speed the Plough  
Amherst County, VA

- 
- <sup>29</sup> *Genealogical Files of the Dawson Family*; *Amherst County Deed Book R*, 209 (14 October 1825); *Amherst County Deed Book V*, 241 (30 November 1835); *Genealogical Files of the Ellis Family*, files of the Amherst County Museum and Historical Society; Samuel Basset French, *Biographical Sketches*, available online from Library of Virginia at <http://lib.va.us>; *Amherst County Deed Book BB*, 118 (16 November 1850); Charles Ellis was born at nearby Red Hill in Amherst County; and Robert Hendrick, *Encyclopedia of Word or Phrase Origins*, (accessed 3 July 2006), available online at <http://www.phrases.org.uk>; and *Speed the Plough*, information regarding origin of phrase available online at <http://www.ibiblio.org/fiddlers/speed.htm>...
- <sup>30</sup> *Genealogical Files of the Dearing Family*, files of the Amherst County Museum and Historical Society; William Dearing, *Letter to his mother* (1856); *Dearing Family Bible*, available online from the Library of Virginia at <http://lib.va.us>; and the *Girling Family Papers*; and William Dearing was born at "Fountain Hill" (now known as Caledonia) located in Rappahannock County, Virginia
- <sup>31</sup> *Federal Slave Census Records of 1860*.
- <sup>32</sup> *Genealogical Files of the Dearing Family*; *Genealogical Files of the Rucker Family*, files of the Amherst County Museum and Historical Society; Christopher D. Rucker, MD, *Biographical Sketches of Thirteen Ruckers of Nineteenth Century Amherst County, Virginia* (1998, unpublished), files of the Amherst County Museum and Historical Society; *Amherst County Order Book 1859-63*, 349, 355, 364, and 368.
- <sup>33</sup> *Chataigne's Business Directory 1888-1889*, available from <http://www.ls.net/~newriver/va/amher88.htm>; *Amherst County Will Book 16*, 227 (23 March 1861); *Federal Census Records of 1870 and 1900*, available online from Ancestry.com at <http://ancestry.com>; *Elon Baptist Church Records*, private collection of Elon Baptist Church; Information from owners; Dudley Chapman, Jr., *Letter to Lorri Girling* (28 November 2002), private collection of owners; *Girling Family Papers*; H. H. Hardesty, "Personal Histories of Amherst County" in *Hardesty's Historical & Geographical Encyclopedia* (Richmond, Va.: Hardesty, 1884), 28; *Virginia Biographical Encyclopedia*, available online from Ancestry.com at <http://ancestry.com>; *Gravestone Inscriptions in Amherst County, Virginia* (Amherst, Va.: Amherst County Museum and Historical Society, revised 1999), 17; The descendants of Alfred still come to visit the farm; and Addie and Radford are buried at the Amherst Public Cemetery.
- <sup>34</sup> *Amherst County Deed Book 69*, 217-218 (19 March 1913); *Amherst County Deed Book 73*, 326 (1 July 1915); *Amherst County Deed Book 84*, 314 (15 July 1921); *Amherst County Deed Book 92*, 422 (18 December 1925); and *Girling Family Papers*.
- <sup>35</sup> *Amherst County Deed Book 92*, 422 (18 December 1925); *Girling Family Papers* Miles "Kim" Pendleton, telephone interview by Sandra Esposito (11 August 2006); and Information from owners.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Speed the Plough  
Amherst County, VA

---

<sup>36</sup> The large family farm in Canada continues to be operated by the Lea family today; Miles “Kim” Pendleton, telephone interview; *Genealogical Files of the Lea Family*, files of the Amherst County Museum and Historical Society; and *Girling Family Papers*.

<sup>37</sup> *Genealogical Files of the Lea Family*; and *Girling Family Papers*.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.; Fairlea farm is a nearby property purchased by George Stevens, willed to Phyllis Lea, and it is also still owned by the Girling family; it has a c.1938 Shingle Style Bungalow, the same building period as most of the structures on the Speed the Plow farm. There was daily communication between the two farms. Rowland Lea, in his declining years, lived at Fairlea under the care of his sister, Phyllis Lea.

<sup>39</sup> *Girling Family Papers*; Information from owners; and the same architect designed Fairlea for Phyllis Lea.

<sup>40</sup> *Girling Family Papers*; Information from owners; Miles “Kim” Pendleton, telephone interview; online from AskArt website at <http://www.askart.com>; and Dr. and Mrs. Girling have some of her work displayed on the living room mantel which has been passed down in the family.

<sup>41</sup> Information from owners.

<sup>42</sup> *Amherst County Will Book* 29, 494 (21 February 1940); *Amherst County Deed Book* 192, 248, (1 August 1958); *Amherst County Deed Book* 193, 50 (26 September 1958); *Amherst County Deed Book* 196, 358 (12 February 1959); *Amherst County Deed Book* 206, 232 (24 March 1960); *Amherst County Deed Book* 478, 1 (12 May 1982); and Information from owners.

<sup>43</sup> *Amherst County Deed Book* 806, 525 (4 April 2000); and Information from owners.

